

REMARKS

I. Introduction

For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art references.

II. The Rejection Of Claims 1-5 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beane et al. (USP No. 5,453,293) in view of Boecker et al. (USP No. 5,624,479) and Wilks et al. (USP No. 3,926,570); and claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pearlstein et al. (USP No. 3,754,939) in view of Wilks. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

With regard to the present invention, claim 1 recites a method for producing conductive particles comprising the steps of: introducing a solution composed mainly of palladium chloride and hydrochloric acid into an electroless plating bath containing a reducing agent, and one from the group consisting of particles of an organic material or particles of an inorganic material while stirring said bath; and simultaneously applying an electroless plating to the surface of said particles and allowing the palladium catalyst to be carried on the surface of said particles to give conductive particles having an electroless plate coating.

One feature of the present invention is that the necessity of a pretreatment process such as providing a palladium catalyst is eliminated. Furthermore, during the process of one embodiment of the present invention, when a small amount of highly concentrated palladium solution is introduced during stirring of the solution, the stirring allows for the palladium to be well dispersed and efficiently adsorbed onto the surface of the particles.

In contrast to the present invention, Beane and Pearlstein disclose a method in which the palladium is in the solution at the beginning step of the process, to which a powder is introduced into the bath containing palladium. Because the plating bath contains palladium from the beginning means that a powder is introduced into a plating bath containing palladium. As is shown in the Comparative Example in the specification, a large amount of palladium solution is required when a powder is introduced to the palladium solution in the method described in Beane and Pearlstein.

As such, neither Beane nor Pearlstein disclose a step introducing a solution composed mainly of palladium chloride and hydrochloric acid into an electroless plating bath containing a reducing agent.

Furthermore, Boecker discloses a pretreatment step in which the substrate is dipped into a palladium solution, after which the substrate is introduced into a plating bath with a palladium catalyst (see, Example, col. 7, line 30-col. 8, line 38 of Boecker). This method corresponds to the conventional pretreatment process disclosed in the specification. Furthermore, Wilks is silent with regard to the use of a palladium catalyst. Accordingly, Boecker and Wilks also fail to disclose a step introducing a solution composed mainly of palladium chloride and hydrochloric acid into an electroless plating bath containing a reducing agent, and simultaneously applying an electroless plating to the surface of said particles and allowing the palladium catalyst to be carried on the surface of said particles.

In order to establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA1974). As is clearly shown, Beane, Boecker, Pearlstein and Wilks do not disclose a

method for producing conductive particles comprising the steps of: introducing a solution composed mainly of palladium chloride and hydrochloric acid into an electroless plating bath containing a reducing agent, and one from the group consisting of particles of an organic material or particles of an inorganic material while stirring said bath; and simultaneously applying an electroless plating to the surface of said particles and allowing the palladium catalyst to be carried on the surface of said particles to give conductive particles having an electroless plate coating. Therefore, Applicants submit that Beane, Boecker, Pearlstein and Wilks do not anticipate, nor render obvious, claim 1 of the present invention and accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the § 103(a) rejections of claim 1 be withdrawn.

III. All Dependent Claims Are Allowable Because The Independent Claim From Which They Depend Is Allowable

Under Federal Circuit guidelines, a dependent claim is nonobvious if the independent claim upon which it depends is allowable because all the limitations of the independent claim are contained in the dependent claims, *Hartness International Inc. v. Simplimatic Engineering Co.*, 819 F.2d at 1100, 1108 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Accordingly, as claim 1 is patentable for the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that all pending dependent claims are also in condition for allowance.

IV. Conclusion

Having responded to all open issues set forth in the Office Action, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance.

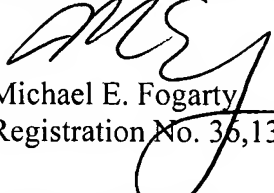
To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper,

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including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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